

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5855

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 19, 2007

Title: An act relating to modification of the higher education coordinating board.

Brief Description: Implementing the Washington learns modifications.

Sponsors: Senators Delvin, Shin, Berkey, Kilmer, Oemig and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/15/07, 2/19/07 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5855 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Shin, Chair; Kilmer, Vice Chair; Delvin, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Schoesler and Sheldon.

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: The Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) is a ten-member citizen board that administers the state's student financial aid programs and provides planning, coordination, monitoring, and policy analysis for higher education in Washington. Appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, board members serve four-year terms, except for the student member who serves a one year term. The board selects from its membership a chair and a vice-chair who each serve a one-year term. The chair and vice-chair may serve more than one term if selected to do so by the membership. The HECB employs a director who serves at the pleasure of the HECB. An Advisory Council, which includes K-12 education and higher education leaders, advises the board on carrying out its statutory duties.

Summary of Bill: It is clarified that the student member's term begins on the first day of July. The Governor appoints an executive director from a list of three names submitted by the HECB. The list may be expanded if required. The executive director serves at the pleasure of the Governor. The HECB advisory council is eliminated. The deadlines for budget proposals are changed. Proposed budgets must be submitted to the HECB by July 1, instead of August 1, each year. The HECB then submits its recommendations to the Office of Financial Management by October 1 each year, instead of November 1.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED SUBSTITUTE AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Higher Education): The HECB advisory council is not eliminated. The emergency clause only applies to the section regarding the date of employment of the executive director.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The executive director position is a cabinet level position, so it is proper that the Governor has the authority to appoint the person. The earlier budget submission dates will facilitate a better budget process.

OTHER: The bill may need some technical amendments to make sure it works as intended.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Delvin, prime sponsor; Deb Merle, Governor's Office; J. W. Harrington, Patricia Chentrill, Council of Faculty Representatives; Jeff Gombosky, Eastern Washington University; Nathaniel Hong, Washington Education Association; Phil Jack, American Federation of Teachers (AFT); Clifford Traisman, AFT Washington and United Faculty of Washington State.

OTHER: Bill Grinstein, HECB.